UNITED
NATIONS

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr. GENERAL

CEDAW/C/NIC/3
15 October 1992

ENGLISH
Original : SPANISH

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women (CEDAW)

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Third periodic reports of States parties

NICARAGUA*

* For the initial report submitted by the Government of Nicaragua, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.55; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.137 and CEDAW/C/SR.139, and Official Records of the General Assembly, forty-fourth session Supplement No. 38 (A/44/38), paras. 169-212, for second periodic report submitted by the Government of Nicaragua, see CEDAW/C/13/Add.20. This document has been translated from an unedited original. Reference material received with the report is available in the reference centre in the Division for the Advancement of Women in the original language in which it was received.

V.92 57668 (EX)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION 3

I. GENERAL SITUATION 4

1.1 Territory 4
1.2 Population and health 4
1.3 Education 6
1.4 Economic participation 6
1.5 Women as head of the family 6

II. POLITICAL STRUCTURE 8

2.1 Executive authority 8
2.2 Leglislative authority 9
2.3 Judicial authority 9
2.4 Electoral authority 10

III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS 11

IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS 12

4.1 Background (1970-1990) 12
4.2 Socio-economic strategy of the Nicaraguan Government under Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro 13
4.3 National mechinery for eliminating discrimination against women 16
4.3.1 Social policy 17
4.3.2 Plan of Social Communication 18
4.3.3 Promotion of change in the legal famework 18
4.3.4 Programme for the advancement of women and the fulfillment of all women's needs 19
4.3.5 National and regional commissions 19

V. MEASURES TO GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF NON-NATIONALS 21

VI. MEASURES ADOPTED TO GUARANTEE RIGHTS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION 22

VII. PROVISIONS FOR ENSURING THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN AS ENSHRINED IN THE CONVENTION ON DISCRIMINATION 24

7.1 Social 24
7.2 Labour 26
7.3 Penal 27
7.4 Nicaraguan women and international conventions 28
7.4.1 Convention on the nationality of married women 29
7.4.2 Convention on the nationality of women 29
7.4.3 Convention on the political rights of women 29
7.4.4 Inter-American Convention on the granting of political rights to women 29
7.4.5 Convention on the granting of civil rights to women 30
7.4.6 Declaration on the elimination of discrimination against women 30
7.4.7 Declaration on the protection of women and children in states of emergency or armed conflict 31

BIBLIOGRAPHY 35

INTRODUCTION

This document represents the third report of the Nicaraguan Government to the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, submitted in accordance with the Committee's requirements.

In general terms the report presents the basic data concerning Nicaragua and the political, social and economic situation under recent Governments, as well as the steps taken by the present Government of Mrs Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.

The effects of the damage to the economy produced by the armed conflict during almost ten years (decade of the 'eighties), the economic crisis, and the critical state of the country when the new Government took over are of decisive importance for understanding the effects on the condition and situation of the population, especially Nicaraguan women.

It can be seen, in the light of the various international conventions, that previous Governments as well as the present one have pursued a progressive policy as concerns subscribing to agreements which are of benefit to Nicaraguan women; nevertheless, factors like those previously mentioned and others of an ideological, cultural and social nature have hampered rapid and effective progress in achieving the rights of women as enshrined both in the Political Constitution of Nicaragua and in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

It is in this context that the Government of Nicaragua, in accordance with its Government programme and the international agreements it has ratified, immediately set about establishing machinery to provide a response to the urgent needs and demands of over half the Nicaraguan population - women - above all because it was upon their shoulders and those of their children that fell the greater part of the costs of the war and the economic crisis, and because they have played a vital role in the quest for peace, reconciliation and development of the country.

I. GENERAL SITUATION

1.1 Territory

The area of the Republic of Nicaragua is 130,682 km^2. The national territory is situated between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Republics of Honduras and Costa Rica.

In Nicaragua there are four different climate zones: tropical savannah on the Pacific coast and part of the central region; tropical rain forest with monsoons in some parts of the central region and of the Atlantic coast; and tropical rain forest on the Atlantic coast.

The national territory is divided for administrative purposes into Departments and Municipalities. The legislation in this regard defines the size, number, organization, structure and functioning of the various areas. The municipality is the basic unit of political administration, and the number and size of municipalities is determined by law. The administrations of the municipalities constitute the local authorities, which enjoy self-government without detriment to the powers of the central Government.

1.2 Population and health

The estimated population in 1990 was 3,871,000 [1], 50.4 per cent of whom constitute the female population - with a density of 32 inhab./km^2, the majority (62 per cent) being concentrated in the urban areas. According to estimates of the Nicaraguan Institute for Statistics and Censuses (INEC), by the year 2,000 Nicaragua will have over 5.1 million inhabitants, of whom 1.7 million will probably be concentrated in Managua, the capital of Nicaragua.

The uneven nature of population distribution is also reflected in the administrative regions. In the Pacific region, Managua with almost 30 per cent of the total population contrasts with the low population density of the Atlantic regions. This distribution, the result of high population mobility (given that the most thinly populated zones are those with the highest fertility rates), is also affected by non-demographic factors like the past political and military situation, the services infrastructure and the availability of jobs, etc., making Managua the principal pole of attraction, representing 43 per cent of the country's total urban population.

The global fertility rate officially estimated for the five year period 1980-1985 was 5.9 children per woman, similar to the 5.8 found by the Nicaraguan Socio-Demographic Survey carried out in 1985 (ESDENIC-85) [2]; no major reduction is expected over the next three-year period. Estimates for the five years from 1990 to 1995 give a figure of 5 children per woman, one of the highest in Central America.

This fertility rate is mainly accounted for by women between 15 and 29 years of age (61 per cent) and the remainder by women over 30 (this group will require greater attention because of the high obstetrical risk resulting from their age and the large number of births) and by adolescent women (where there is need for sex education in order to reduce the incidence of early pregnancy).

The estimated life expectancy for both sexes, also corroborated by ESDENIC-85, was 59.6 years. However, by sex this gave a difference of 63.3 to 60.9 for women, and 56.1 to 58.7 for men.

The gender difference in mortality, historically not very important, was recently accentuated by the armed conflict of the past few years. It is also likely that the improved coverage of the mother and child programme (special care for high risk groups) has contributed to the lower mortality of women.

---

1 Government of the Republic of Nicaragua. NICARAGUA NATIONAL REPORT. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, UNCED-BRAZIL 1992. Managua, 1991.

2 The most recent official census in Nicaragua dates from 1971. The official source of statistical information now being used in the country is the Nicaraguan Socio-Demographic Survey carried out in 1985 and known as ESDENIC-85.

NICARAGUA: DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS BY FIVE-YEAR PERIODS 1980-2005

DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS	FIVE - YEAR PERIODS				
	1980/1985	1985/1990	1990/1995	1995/2000	2000/2005
FERTILITY					
Annual births B (thousands)	134.00	149.00	163.00	174.00	183.00
Crude birth rate B (per thousand)	44.21	41.80	38.70	35.41	32.39
Global fertility rate	5.94	5.50	5.01	4.50	4.01
Gross reproduction rate	2.90	2.68	2.44	2.20	1.96
MORTALITY					
Annual deaths D (thousands)	29.00	29.00	28.00	28.00	29.00
Gross mortality rate D (per thousand)	9.69	7.98	6.65	5.74	5.21
Life expectancy at birth:					
Both sexes	59.81	63.26	66.22	68.50	68.52
Men	58.68	61.98	64.80	66.98	71.79
Women	60.99	64.61	67.71	70.10	70.12
Infant mortality rate (per thousand)	76.44	61.67	49.85	41.28	35.47
NATURAL INCREASE					
Annual increase B-D (thousands)	105.00	120.00	135.00	146.00	153.00
Rate of natural increase (per thousand)	34.52	33.82	32.04	29.67	27.18
Net reproduction rate	2.43	2.33	2.19	2.00	1.81
MIGRATION					
Annual migration = M (thousands)	-4.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	0.00
Rate of migration = m (per thousand)	-1.32	-0.28	-0.24	-0.2	0.00
TOTAL INCREASE					
Annual increase B − D + (−)M (thousands)	100.00	120.00	134.00	144.00	153.00
TOTAL RATE OF INCREASE:					
r (per thousand)	33.20	33.54	31.80	29.47	27.18

Source: Nicaraguan Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), Fascicle F-NIC 1, "Nicaragua: Population estimates and projections 1950-2025", revised September-December 1982.

NICARAGUA: RATES AND STRUCTURES OF FERTILITY BY AGE OF WOMEN 1980-2005

AGE GROUPS	PERIODS				
	1980/1985	1985/1990	1990/1995	1995/2000	2000/2005
15 - 19	0.1406	0.1316	0.1212	0.1102	0.0993
20 - 24	0.3150	0.3013	0.2842	0.2643	0.2433
25 - 29	0.3009	0.2827	0.2612	0.2376	0.2140
30 - 34	0.2118	0.1936	0.1735	0.1529	0.1336
35 - 39	0.1472	0.1301	0.1124	0.0964	0.0804
40 - 44	0.0580	0.0492	0.0406	0.0328	0.0264
45 - 49	0.0144	0.0116	0.0089	0.0067	0.0051
GFR	6.31	5.50	5.01	4.50	4.01

Source: INEC-CELADE, Fascicle F-NIC 1, "Nicaragua: Population estimates and projections 1950-2025, revised September-December 1982.

Although the deaths of young men have declined, and their life expectancy may have increased by two years, the life expectancy of women is still higher. It is also worth noting the weight of declining infant mortality (less than expected) in the increasing life expectancy. However, when broken down by sex, the figures still show a high rate of maternal mortality (9.7 per 10,000 live births) [3], above all at the level of hospital services. The principal causes of maternal mortality are abortion, of which 69.2 per cent are spontaneous and 2.6 per cent therapeutic, haemorrhages and post-partum infections, and hypertensive illness. In most cases, the characteristics that accompany these causes are primarily poor nutrition, low educational level, and the threat to maternal health associated with high reproductive risk (very early as well as late pregnancies, short intervals between pregnancies, and large number of births). There has also been poor access to proper care during pregnancy and the post-natal period.

1.3 Education

It is estimated that in 1989, 30.5 per cent of the Nicaraguan population were illiterate, with women representing 51.6 per cent [4].

The highest illiteracy rate is found among women in rural areas, where they represent 40 per cent of women. Similarly, it is calculated that only 50 per cent of women have had access to primary schooling.

At the level of secondary education and as a consequence of the armed conflict, the participation of women has risen considerably. In 1988, women represented 65.7 per cent of total secondary school enrolment, and the figure was even higher in rural areas, where they represented 91.6 per cent [5].

In higher education, too, there has been an increase in the participation of women, rising from 1 per cent in 1979 to 13 per cent in 1985, with women mainly going in for education, medicine, economics, agronomy, social sciences, and engineering. At the university level, it has been decided that 50 per cent of student places should be reserved for women [6].

1.4 Economic participation

In 1950 women represented about 20.8 per cent of the Economically Active Population (EAP), rising significantly to 32.5 per cent in 1985 and to 34 per cent in 1990 [7], this being mainly due to the deepening economic crisis which forced more members of the family, particularly in the poorest sectors, to seek additional income; the growing number of households headed by women; and the disappearance of male manpower, because of the war, and its replacement by women.

Sectorally, women are most important in the informal sector of the economy, since there they can combine domestic tasks with economic activity. There are also other factors at work, such as lack of education, which denies them access to the better jobs, as well as ideological and cultural factors that discriminate against women, such as the persistence of stereotypes suggesting that women should confine themselves to work that is an extension of domestic labour.

1.5 Women as head of the family

As far as Nicaraguan households are concerned, various studies as well as data from the most recent socio-demographic survey carried out in Nicaragua in 1985 suggest that a quarter of all households are headed by women, and that this percentage is rising from year to year. The principal factors associated with

---

3 Ministry of Health. TRIENNIAL HEALTH PLAN 1991-1993. Managua, 1991.

4 ILO Inter-American Training Centre (CINTERFOR), PROMOTING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING. CINTERFOR/INATEC. Nicaragua, 1992.

5 Ministry of Education. 1988 YEARBOOK. Managua, 1989.

6 Pérez A. Paola. DIAGNOSIS OF THE SITUATION OF NICARAGUAN WOMEN. Managua, 1990.

7 Garcia, Ana Isabel et al. CENTRAL AMERICAN WOMEN. FLACSO, San José, 1989.

the increase in number of households headed by women have to do with the economic crisis, and the fact that women are assuming a larger share of responsibility for the family's survival. There is also the fact that many women with children are abandoned by their husbands - an indication of growing irresponsibility on the part of fathers.

However, this does not necessarily mean that such households are in a better economic situation; on the contrary, many households headed by women are in the poorest economic sectors. This is explained by the fact that they almost always receive lower earnings, have a larger number of dependents, and have poorer access to resources of all kinds. Studies carried out in 1989 [8] for the population of Managua, which represents 27 per cent of the national population, suggest that 54.9 per cent of poor households are headed by women.

---

[8] Pérez A. Paola. Ibid.

II. POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Nicaragua is an independent, free, unitary and indivisible state. Nicaragua is a democratic, participative and representative republic.

The people of Nicaragua is multi-ethnic in nature, and is an integral part of the Central American Nation. Spanish is the official language of the State, while the languages of the ethnic groups in Nicaragua's Atlantic coast region are also officially used in the cases established by law.

Nicaragua firmly defends the unity of Central America. It supports and promotes all efforts to achieve political and economic integration and cooperation in Latin America, as well as efforts to establish and preserve peace in the region.

The Constitution is the fundamental charter of the Republic, the other laws being subordinated to it. Laws, treaties, orders or dispositions that are inconsistent with its provisions are without effect. No State authority, Government organ or official has other authority, power or jurisdiction than those conferred by the Political Constitution and the laws of the Republic.

The following are the organs of the Nicaraguan State:

- The Executive Authority;
- The Legislative Authority;
- The Judicial Authority;
- The Electoral Authority.

2.1 Executive authority

This is exercised by the President of the Republic, Mrs Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, who is Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence and Security Forces of the Nation.

To be President, one must:

- Be a Nicaraguan national;
- Enjoy all one's civil and political rights;
- Be at least 25 years old.

The duties of the President are:

- To comply with and ensure compliance with the political constitution and the laws;

- To represent the nation;

- To exercise the power to initiate legislation and the right of veto as established in the present Constitution;

- To issue executive decrees with the force of law in fiscal and administrative matters;

- To prepare the General Budget of the Republic, and to promulgate it after it has been approved or taken note of, as appropriate, by the National Assembly;

- To appoint and remove ministers and vice-ministers of State, minister delegates of the Presidency, presidents or directors of autonomous and governmental agencies, and other officials whose appointment or removal is not otherwise determined in the Constitution and the laws;

- To assume the legislative powers delegated to him by the National Assembly during its period of recess;

- To direct the international relations of the Republic, conclude treaties, conventions or international agreements, and appoint the heads of diplomatic missions;

- To decree and enact the state of emergency in the cases provided for in this Political Constitution, and to send the decree to the National Assembly for its ratification within a period not longer than 45 days.

- To regulate the laws;

- To confer national orders, honours and decorations;

- To organize and direct the Government and preside over meetings of the cabinet;

- To direct the economy of the country, and determine the policy and the socio-economic programme;

- To propose lists to the National Assembly for the election of justices to the Supreme Court of Justice, magistrates to the Supreme Electoral Council, and the Comptroller-General of the Republic;

- To direct to the National Assembly, personally or through the Vice-President, the annual report and other reports and special messages;

- To exercise the other powers vested in him by this Constitution and the laws.

2.2 Legislative authority

Legislative authority is exercised by the National Assembly as delegated and mandated by the people. The National Assembly is composed of 92 representatives and their respective alternates, of whom fifteen are now women representatives with ten alternates. They are elected by universal, equal, direct, free and secret ballot, in electoral districts, under the system of proportional representation and as regulated by the electoral law. The number of representatives may increase in accordance with the general population census, in conformity with the law, and are elected for a period of six years.

To be a representative in the National Assembly, one must:

- Be a Nicaraguan national;
- Enjoy one's full civil and political rights;
- Be at least 21 years old.

2.3 Judicial authority

The Courts of Justice form a unitary system, whose superior body is the Supreme Court of Justice.

The functions of the judicial authority are:

- To organize and direct the administration of justice;

- To hear and adjudicate ordinary and extraordinary appeals brought against decisions by the courts of justice of the Republic in accordance with the procedures established by law;

- To hear and adjudicate appeals against violations of rights established in the Constitution in accordance with the Law on Protection of Rights;

- To hear and adjudicate charges of unconstitutionality of laws brought in conformity with the Constitution and the Law on Protection;

- To appoint the judges of the appeals courts and the justices of the courts of the Republic in accordance with the procedures prescribed by law;

- To adopt its internal regulations and to appoint judicial personnel;

- To exercise the other powers conferred by the Constitution and the laws.

The administration of justice guarantees the principle of legality, and protects and fosters human rights through the application of the law in matters or proceedings within its competence.

Division of the judicial authority

The highest authority is exercised by the justices of the Supreme Court of Justice, which comprises a minimum of seven judges elected by the National Assembly from lists proposed by the President of the Republic. The President of the Supreme Court of Justice is appointed by the President of the Republic.

Justices and judges, in their judicial activity, are independent and owe obedience only to the Constitution and the law, and are guided *inter alia* by the principles of equality, the right to public trial, and the right to defence.

2.4 Electoral authority

The electoral authority has exclusive responsibility for the organization, management and supervision of elections, plebiscites and referenda. The electoral authority is composed of the Supreme Electoral Council and other subordinate electoral bodies.

The Supreme Electoral Council is composed of five justices with their respective alternates, elected by the National Assembly from lists proposed by the President of the Republic. The National Assembly chooses the President of the Supreme Electoral Council, from among the elected justices.

The President and the other justices of the Supreme Electoral Council serve for a period of six years from their entry into office, and during that time enjoy immunity.

III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The general legal framework for the protection of human rights is based on the Political Constitution of Nicaragua, Article 46 of which establishes the unrestricted respect for and promotion and protection of human rights throughout the national territory, as well as the full exercise of the rights enshrined in the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the American Convention on Human Rights.

The judicial, administrative or other authorities which have jurisdiction affecting human rights and fundamental freedoms are:

- The judicial system;
- The office of the public prosecutor;
- The national police.

The remedies available to persons wishing to protest the infringement of any of their rights are:

- The right to bring private suit;
- The other rights of defence contained in the Political Constitution, which give constitutional status to the International Covenants on Human Rights;
- The right to appeal against the unconstitutionality of laws.

IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

4.1 Background (1970-1990)

During the decade of the 1970's the Nicaraguan economic situation was characterized by a long period of depression and economic instability, exacerbated by the 1972 earthquake which levelled Managua, the capital of Nicaragua.

Between 1970 and 1974 the country's budget deficit increased from 75 million to 340 million córdobas. External and internal factors, like the opening of the economy to international markets and the absence of a sound economic policy which might have created a climate of stability for economic and social development, as well as the deepening political crisis in late 1977 and 1979, brought on a major economic disruption which was reflected in the living standards of the population.

At the end of the 1970's, 50.3 per cent of the population were illiterate [9], 67.8 per cent of children under five were malnourished, 93 per 1,000 live births died before one year of age, and 33 per cent of the Economically Active Population (EAP) were underemployed.

Against this legacy from the past, and with a radical change in the political and economic system, the decade of the eighties ushered in a new period of development for the State. The principle was adopted of expanding public services, in order to provide a response to the critical situation, the lack of infrastructure and services, and the abandonment of a majority of the population as concerns access to social services.

However, during the second half of the decade of the 'eighties, very severe problems arose: international crisis, domestic political and military crisis, and macro-economic disequilibria. These problems culminated in a situation of uncontrollable hyper-inflation. Thus, by the end of 1987, the inflation rate reached an annual equivalent of almost 5,000 per cent, rising in 1988 to 33,000 per cent [10]. This profound crisis was reflected in a collapse of real income in the formal sector, which dropped to 6 per cent of its 1980 value. There was an alarming rise in levels of poverty, and by 1988 some 80 per cent of the population were estimated to be well below the poverty line [11].

A key factor in the deterioration in the Nicaraguan economy was the armed conflict [12]. According to official estimates, the direct material damage sustained in the period 1980-88 amounted to US$1,979,900 million, and the total economic damage, including indirect costs, was on the order of US$9,087,700 million [13]. This situation was compounded by other problems: natural disasters (hurricane Juana in 1988), the cuts in external assistance from 1982 onwards, and inequitable terms of trade on the international level.

Against this background, the previous Government [14] implemented a programme of economic adjustment from 1985 onwards. While those adjustments did help to reduce the deficit, from 20 per cent of GNP in 1988 to 7 per cent in 1989 [15], they also resulted in a further decline of living conditions of the poor: worsening unemployment and impoverishment, hitting children under ten years of age, women heads of families, and population groups affected by the war. Similarly, inflation began to rise again in the first few months of 1990.

---

9 Government of the Republic of Nicaragua. Ibid.

10 Pérez Alemán, Paola. Ibid.

11 García, Ana Isabel et al. Ibid.

12 The defence budget rose from 7 per cent in 1981 to 62 per cent in 1988. Pérez A. Paola. Idem.

13 Government of the Republic of Nicaragua. NICARAGUA NATIONAL REPORT, UNCED-BRAZIL 1992. Managua, 1991.

14 The political party Sandinist Front for National Liberation (FSLN) held power in Nicaragua from 19 July 1979 until 25 April 1990.

15 Pérez Alemán, Paola. Ibid.

4.2 Socio-economic strategy of the Government of Nicaragua under Violeta Barrios de Chamorro

On 25 February 1990, Nicaragua held democratic elections which were won by Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, the candidate for the Presidency of the Republic put up by the National Opposition Union (NOU) coalition.

When the UNO coalition took over the Government in April 1990, Nicaragua's external debt had reached about US$3,000 per inhabitant, i.e. 33 times the value of exports, and more than five times GNP - the highest rate of indebtedness in Latin America. International reserves were negligible, the exchange rate was overvalued, there was a steep rise in domestic borrowing, and the national budget was more than 50 per cent used up. The previous Government had abandoned its efforts to stabilize the economy in the first quarter of 1990, and in particular had increased public sector wages, thereby increasing the fiscal deficit to US$26.2 million, equivalent to 20 per cent of GNP in just one month, and the financing of this deficit gave a further twist to the inflationary spiral [16].

When the new Government took office under President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, it had immediately to suspend payments on account and other unforeseen expenditures. Then, social pressures in early May of 1990 made salary adjustments unavoidable, all of which gave rise to a central Government deficit which, by May 1990, had risen to US$23 million . However, by July of the same year, the deficit had been reduced to US$15 million, and was further substantially reduced, by September 1990, to US$6.8 million [17].

Nicaragua was in a very grave situation, one perhaps unprecedented in its history, so that the living conditions of the population were comparable to those of 1945. At the same time there was the challenge of achieving peace among Nicaraguans as a basic condition for economic take-off. Thus, the Government faced the triple challenge of: "**achieving peace**", in a country convulsed by almost a decade of armed conflict, "**moving from an economy of hyper-inflation and highly distorted markets to an economy of more efficient markets**", and of "changing deep-rooted social values, attitudes and structures in order to initiate a process of self-sustaining development" [18].

In order to cope with the situation, the political and strategic orientation of the Chamorro Government were based on the principle that "**There can be no rehabilitation or effective development of the country without reconciliation**" [19]. This principle translates into the central thrust of the policies of reconciliation and development, and has become the frame of reference for all programmes and projects.

The principal objectives which derive from the global policies of reconciliation and development may be summarized as [20]:

a) National reconciliation and the creation of conditions to strengthen the foundations of social harmony, peace and solidarity, within a democratic framework to guarantee respect for the equal dignity of women and men, as a mainstay of the social scaffolding;

b) Incorporation of women and men, without discrimination for political, ethnic, religious or gender reasons, in a common project of sustainable development, to foster: the restoration and preservation of the environment; rapid and broad-based economic growth, with emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises; and the human development necessary to provide leadership in the process of reconciliation and development, ensuring active participation in overcoming poverty;

c) Effective national integration, with balanced development as between rural and urban areas and between various regions of the country, with special emphasis on the development of the Atlantic coast and the former areas of conflict.

---

16 Central Bank of Nicaragua. ACHIEVING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HARMONY. Speech by Dr. Emilio Pereira Alegría, Minister of Finance, 20 September 1990. Managua, 1990.

17 Idem.

18 Central Bank of Nicaragua. NICARAGUA: MEDIUM TERM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1992-1996.

19 Ministry of the Presidency. CIREFCA PLAN OF ACTION 1992-1995. Summary. Managua, 1992.

20 Idem.

The principal achievements of Government in 1990 and 1991 may be seen in the following [21]:

Peace

A majority of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance have laid down their arms and rejoined civilian society. The army has been reduced by one third. Similarly, agreements have been concluded among the various social and political groups.

Hyperinflation

As of 3 March 1991, the official exchange rate was set at 5 córdobas to the dollar, and there was an end to the inflationary financing of the fiscal deficit and of
loans to the productive sectors. Inflation was reduced to zero in a period of 8 weeks, while the cost of the basic basket of goods was brought down by 7.8 per cent between the last week of April 1991 and the first week of March 1992.

Private sector freedoms restored

Liberation and deregulation of the economy, improved access to external markets, the clear definition and guarantee of property rights, renewed viability of the financial sector, and privatization of state enterprises.

Cushioning the social costs of adjustment

Assistance and external financing were obtained for the transitional funding of the fiscal deficit, making possible a gradual reduction of expenditure; public sector employees were given generous redundancy payments, and finally there was a crash programme of job creation through public works.

Obtaining external finance

Bilateral aid was secured up to 1992. The arrears of US$320 million owed to the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) were brought up to date with bilateral assistance. A loan was signed with the IMF for US$40.86 million in Special Drawing Rights, and new financial agreements were negotiated with IDA and IDB for 1991 and 1992. There was a considerable reduction in debt servicing obligations for 1991 and 1992.

For the period 1992-1996, the Government has set itself the following objectives under the global development strategy [22]:

Stability

To keep domestic inflation close to world inflation levels, and to consolidate monetary stability through regulation and institutional structures.

Growth

To put the economy on the road to rapid, self-sustaining, environmentally viable, and broadly diversified development, in the context of efficient and competitive markets. To re-integrate the country into the international financial and commercial community.

---

21 Government of Nicaragua. NICARAGUA: MEDIUM TERM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1992-1996. Managua, 1992.

22 Idem.

Improvement of living conditions

To improve income distribution and living standards for the majority of poor people, in a manner structurally sustainable in the long term, improving equality of opportunity, eliminating extreme poverty, creating jobs, and protecting the most vulnerable groups.

Protection of the environment

To halt and reverse the process of deforestation and depredation of other natural resources. To assure the long-term sustainable use of natural resources.

National integration

To reverse the trend whereby population and economic activity are concentrated in Managua and the Pacific zone, and to integrate the Atlantic coast and other former war zones into the national socio-economic system.

Financial self-sufficiency

Gradually to reduce the trade deficit to levels that can be financed in the long term with a minimum of external grants or concessional loans.

Cultural change

To bring about profound changes in the values and attitudes of Nicaraguans as expressed in their social and political institutions, to make possible social co-existence on a peaceful, mutually supportive, responsible and productive basis.

Specifically in the social area, and bearing in mind that over two-thirds of the Nicaraguan population live in poverty, the Government of Nicaragua aims in its Social Policy "**to reduce poverty and promote the integral development of human beings in their economic, socio-cultural, political and community aspects, so that they may be able to meet their essential needs, and be useful to society**" [23].

In order to achieve this objective, the Government will:

- Promote reconciliation in the country and consolidate the peace process already initiated, using dialogue and consultation as a fundamental mechanism for maintaining social stability;

- Re-integrate population groups uprooted by the armed conflict, establishing conditions for their inclusion in productive civilian life;

- Promote the generation of productive employment, with a view to increasing the income of the most disadvantaged sectors;

- Promote the equitable improvement of living conditions of the population;

- Improve infrastructure in the social sector;

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions in the social sector;

- Support the broadening of legislation required to address social problems not now covered by the law. Revise laws which fail to protect mothers and discriminate on grounds of sex, ethnic origin or disability, thereby limiting human development.

---

[23] Government of the Republic of Nicaragua. SOCIAL POLICY. Draft document. Managua, August 1992.

Groups and territories to which priority is to be given in the Social Policy are [24]:

Groups

- Poor households where the head of the family is a woman;
- Landless peasants;
- The unemployed and under-employed;
- The most vulnerable groups (children in especially difficult circumstances, the disabled, victims of war, displaced persons, the repatriated, and the demobilized);
- Ethnic minorities.

Territories

- The areas where people are hardest hit by the war and the economic crisis: the large central region of the country and the autonomous regions of the Atlantic;

- Zones with the greatest concentration of poverty in departments and municipalities, particularly in rural areas;

- Peripheral urban zones in the principal cities.

Thus, activities under the Economic Policy and those under the Social Policy are intended to be synchronized, integral and integrated in a single strategy or National Development Policy. It is with the interaction of both that Nicaragua can make progress in overcoming its problems and advancing towards social justice.

4.3 National machinery for eliminating discrimination against women

The Government of Nicaragua under President of the Republic Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, in pursuance of its Government programme and faced with the gravity of the present crisis - where women, because of discrimination against them, are especially vulnerable - in November 1990 reactivated [25] the Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM); and in January 1991 it was brought into the Cabinet. This means that women will now benefit from the country's global policies.

There is a clear awareness of the disadvantaged situation of Nicaraguan women and their families, and it is understood that a solution is not the exclusive affair of women, but rather of the State and of the whole of society; thus a fundamental way of transforming the situation is through the active participation of Nicaraguan women in the process of sustained development, and also as beneficiaries of that development.

The principal factors making for this situation are legislative, socio-economic and ideological or cultural in nature; there are other, "invisible" factors, too, that perpetuate the subordination of women. These are principally the role played by domestic work, compounded by the burden of economic activities undertaken for the purpose of increasing the family income, which means that women have to do a double day's work.

Another factor, as was noted in Chapter 1 of this report, is that Nicaraguan women tend to begin their child-bearing years very early, which involves risks to their life, particularly in the case of young women and women over the age of thirty-five. Similarly, the lingering effects of poor nutrition from girlhood on, combined with the brief intervals between pregnancies and births and the large number of children, as well as the wear and tear of a double day's work, mean that women age prematurely and face higher risks to life from maternal mortality.

---

[25] When Mrs Violeta Barrios de Chamorro took over the Presidency of Nicaragua in April 1990, the Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM) had no physical existence, so that its reactivation was one of the urgent measures for giving effect to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The increase in the number of households headed by women, particularly in the poor sectors, is alarming, due principally to the tendency of men to move around and the abandonment of the family by the husband. In this situation women become the main emotional, moral and economic support of their children and other family members. Thus, young women who are heads of family in the poor urban sectors as well as in the country are now, because of their special situation, to be given priority attention under the Social and Economic Policy of the Nicaraguan Government.

Alongside these factors, there are others of a cultural or ideological order which constrain the full development of Nicaraguan women, and which are deep-rooted in the awareness of both the male and female population. These generate and perpetuate discriminatory stereotypes which are based on the idea that because of her reproductive function, woman must play a particular role in society, must bear absolute responsibility for looking after her husband and bringing up her children, and must limit her participation in economic activity to raising her living standards and those of her family.

In this context, the Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM), in co-ordination with the various authorities of State, and in conformity with the policies of seeking to benefit young women who are heads of family in poor sectors and in extreme poverty, and considering the various factors that lead to discrimination against women, has adopted a strategy designed to bring about sweeping changes in this situation and to ensure steady progress towards equality between women and men in Nicaragua. In this strategy, priority areas have been established which will make it possible to eliminate discrimination and promote the full and integrated development of Nicaraguan women, as follows:

4.3.1 Social policy

Area of activity: Formulation, follow-up and evaluation of the Social Policy.

Active participation in the process of consultation leading to the formulation of Nicaragua's Social Policy, in the course of which it was decided to give priority to young women and women heads of family in marginal urban sectors and in rural areas, and to those in areas affected by natural disasters and war. On the basis of the Policy, specific areas were identified for the purposes of job creation, health, education, training and credit.

Steps are also being taken to ensure inter-institutional co-ordination, which will enable INIM to work together with all Government institutions, so that in all phases of the Government's strategies, policies, programmes, plans and projects, account will be taken of the situation of discrimination and subordination in which Nicaraguan women find themselves.

Area of activity: Establishing an information and documentation system concerning Nicaraguan women.

The statistical data now available concerning the situation of Nicaraguan women, while incomplete, do provide some notion of the precarious economic and social situation in which they find themselves. Nevertheless, an examination of the available statistics shows that they suffer from severe limitations and do not give a clear picture of the real situation of women, which makes it difficult to design policies for the elimination of obstacles to the development of women in conditions of equality.

In view of this situation, INIM is working to set up a system of statistical information, broken down by sex and age groups, area of residence and other characteristics, at all levels of the central Government's institutions.

Stress will be laid on the necessity for these statistical sources to include information on fertility from the start of a woman's reproductive period, as well as full information concerning the number of children and abortions, and the incidence of maternal mortality and the factors that affect it.

As in the other areas, a co-ordinated effort is being made to present data broken down by sex and economic activities, sectors, hours and days of work done, as well as the economic and social significance of housework.

This system of statistical information is also designed to keep track of progress in meeting the priorities established in the Social and Economic Policy concerning children, women and the family, so that periodic evaluations can be undertaken in order provide guidance and to ensure compliance with the strategic principles laid down in both policy areas.

The Nicaraguan Institute for Women is also part of the Sub-Regional Network of Offices for Women in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, which will be used to establish a database on women's organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. This will enable women in the sub-regions to pool their efforts and to compare their experiences.

Finally, a Documentation Centre for Nicaraguan Women is being organized, which will be available to all Government institutions and non-governmental organizations, study centres and women in general. There is an urgent practical need for such a centre, to promote an understanding of women as actors in constructing the history of Nicaragua, and to make known their concerns and their reality, which is part of the reality which is taking shape.

4.3.2 Plan of Social Communication

Area of activity: Developing a gender-oriented strategy of social communication.

To help eliminate discriminatory values and stereotypes concerning women and men, and to enlist the whole of society in transforming the situation of disadvantage in which women find themselves, a strategy of social communication has been elaborated for the whole of society, including Government authorities, leaders, and especially women.

Specifically, this strategy seeks to raise awareness of the situation of women at all levels of Government, from ministers and directors to mayors and local authorities. The plan also includes co-ordination with non-governmental organizations working with women to promote the principal legal, social and economic actions on behalf of Nicaraguan women.

The main aims of the gender-oriented strategy of social communication are to enhance the worth of domestic work done by women, to promote women's right to participate in all spheres of economic, social, political, communal and family life; to improve knowledge of and access to educational, health, work, recreational and cultural resources; and to provide for women and their family a decent life free of threats to their and their children's safety.

4.3.3 Promotion of change in the legal framework

Area of activity:

Inter-institutional co-ordination among appropriate bodies of the legislative and judicial authorities, to ensure that pending legislation, including legislative reform, strengthens the legal and social status of women;

Recommending actions at national and sectoral level to help strengthen the legal and social status of Nicaraguan women;

Strengthening the legal status of women through a plan of action for the implementation of women's programmes.

In this context, the intention is to revise existing and propose new national legislation and international agreements relating to human rights in the areas of civil, criminal and labour law. The focus will be on those aspects that discriminate against women, so that the equality before the law which is enshrined in the Nicaraguan Political Constitution may become a real equality. In this context, INIM is working to formulate a proposal that will provide the legal framework for the real rights of women. It is also proposed to codify the regulations and mechanisms for making possible the proper fulfilment of regulations and provisions.

Some practical steps have been taken in this direction. The National Assembly's Standing Commission on Women, Children, Youth and the Family has proposed to the highest body of the legislative authority that there should be reforms of the penal code in those cases where it has provided for discriminatory treatment against women; women were consulted, as was the entire population, as well as the bodies directly involved. (See Annex "Law No. 5. Law to Reform the Penal Code"). The Commission is currently planning to revise other laws which contain discriminatory treatment of women.

Another successful initiative was the establishment of a "Commission on Violence against Women", which comprises institutions from the executive and judicial authorities, and will work on the establishment of mechanisms to ensure the application of the law to all cases of violence against women and children, so that there may be respect for the physical, mental and moral integrity of those concerned. The Commission will appoint sub-commissions to carry out particular tasks, in which the legislative authority will play a vital role.

4.3.4 Programme for the advancement of women and the fulfillment of all women's needs.

Area of activity:

> **Promoting the development of women and the family in their economic, social, political, family and community aspects, within a framework of equity, so that they may be able to meet their needs, their rights to real equality as citizens being thus respected.**

This programme is based on co-ordination among governmental and non-governmental institutions in all the country's municipalities, to encourage, facilitate and create conditions for the participation of young women and women who are heads of families in development programmes. The programme is an expression of community work through all mayors' offices and with the participation of the organizations represented in the area.

The most important feature of the programme is that it meets the practical as well as the strategic needs of women. It seeks to develop a variety of actions, including literacy campaigns where required, and gender-oriented technical training in both traditional and non-traditional work, through the National Technological Institute (INATEC), which enable women to find work that will bring in a sufficient income for themselves and their families.

In view of the fact that one of the main obstacles to the participation of women in education and training is having to look after children, day care centres are being organized, with the institutional support of the Nicaraguan Institute for Social Security and Welfare (INSSBI) and of the community.

Similarly, through the health units, the Local Systems of Comprehensive Health Care (SILAIS) and the Women's Homes, work is being done in the areas of prevention, assistance, and training of relevance to women's health concerns, especially reproductive health.

Once women have received thorough training (health, legislation, self-esteem and technical training), funding is provided through the municipal banks to set them up in work. Loans from these banks are extended on realistic terms in keeping with the situation of the women, being based principally on the principle of solidarity.

4.3.5 National and regional commissions

The Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM) participates in the National Commissions which are organized for the benefit of women and their families, in order to ensure that activities and decisions fall within the framework of national policy, thereby facilitating their extension to the whole population in a harmonious and comprehensive manner.

a) Commission on Sex Education

In this area the Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM) is giving particular attention to the Commission on Sex Education, which is at the stage of organization and planning with a view to elaborating and executing a strategy on the national level directed at the entire population.

The Commission on Sex Education will seek to meet the need for sex education, both in formal and in informal terms, through educational material issued by the Ministry of Education, which represents a significant advance; it will also seek to direct this type of education to the population at large, through the media and various forms of information.

The Commission comprises elements from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Nicaraguan Institute for Social Security and Welfare, with the Nicaraguan Institute for Women acting as co-ordinating body.

b) National Commission on Maternal Mortality

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Central American Conference on Risk-Free Maternity held in Guatemala from 27-31 January 1992, the Ministry of Health, which administers the health policies of Nicaragua, established a National Commission on Maternal Mortality.

The general objective of this Commission is "**to promote actions aimed at reducing maternal morbidity and mortality in Nicaragua through co-ordination, integration and mutual co-operation between State and society**" [26].

The Commission comprises representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations. It is sub-divided into sub-commissions with specific areas and activities, as follows:

- Sub-commission on health care;
- Sub-commission on social participation;
- Sub-commission on education;
- Legal sub-commission;
- Sub-commission for monitoring and evaluation.

c) Commission on Violence Against Women

This Commission was established on 23 June 1992 by Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, President of the Republic of Nicaragua. The origins of the Commission go back to various activities carried out by governmental and non-governmental organizations on the country level and throughout the Central American region, which culminated in the regional seminar "Violence against Women: A Health Problem", held in Nicaragua under the auspices of the Panamerican Health Organization of WHO, through its programme "**Women, Health and Development**".

As a result of these activities, the Nicaraguan Institute for Women asked the President of the Republic to appoint a commission as a mechanism for significantly reducing violence, principally against children and women.

d) Regional Commission for Social Affairs (CRAS)

This Commission is chaired by the Ministers of Social Affairs of the Central American region and the first ladies from all countries of the region. The Commission concerns itself with the development plans of the region, which include the proposed "Human Development Plan: Childhood and Youth 1992-2000", as well as the regional programme "Women, the Environment and Development" aimed at rural women.

---

[26] First summary report of the National Commission on Maternal Mortality: NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MATERNAL MORTALITY. Managua, 1992.

V. MEASURES TO GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF NON-NATIONALS

Measures to guarantee the rights of persons who are not nationals are established in Article 27 of Nicaragua's Political Constitution, which provides:

> **"All persons are equal before the law and have right to equal protection; there shall be no discrimination for reasons of birth, nationality, religion, opinion, origin, economic position or social condition."**

Foreigners have the same rights and duties as Nicaraguans, with the exception of political rights. Thus, foreigners enjoy legal protection.

VI. MEASURES ADOPTED TO GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION

In Nicaragua, through collective agreements [27], women have obtained special protection for motherhood, the family and reproductive health, as well as the right to training, worker management, occupational health and safety, and trade union activity. We briefly refer to these in what follows [28].

- MINSA-FETSALUD Collective Agreement, 17 June 1989, Clause XV, Claims of Women Health Workers.
- Collective agreement between Empresa Textilera de Nicaragua S.A. (Nicaraguan Textile Enterprise Limited) and the Trade Union, Clause 27, Benefits.
- Collective agreement between Empresa Nacional del Vestuario (National Garment Enterprise) and the Trade Union, Clause 8, Assistance on the birth of children.
- Collective agreement on the construction industry, Article 42, Maternity and women workers.
- Collective agreement between the Jacinto Hernandez Agricultural Company and the Trade Union, Article 26, Rights of women workers during pregnancy.
- Collective agreement with Nicaragua Plywood, Clause 8, Benefits.
- Collective agreement between the Ministry of Education and the National Association of Nicaraguan Educators, Article 12, Child care centres.

The principal rights guaranteed in the agreements are:

Protection of Maternity

1. Glass of milk and a proper meal for women workers during pregnancy and lactating mothers up to six months.
2. Pregnant women not to be assigned to night work from the sixth month of pregnancy.
3. Relocation of pregnant workers from areas where there is toxic radiation.
4. Women's wages to be supplemented to the extent not covered by social insurance.
5. Assistance on the birth of children.
6. Guaranteed workplace for worker receiving benefits.
7. Pregnant women not to be assigned to heavy work or work that could harm their health or the development of the foetus.
8. Four weeks of pre-natal and eight weeks of post-natal leave.
9. Pre-natal medical assistance and monitoring.
10. 50 per cent incentive payments during pre- and post-natal periods.

Protection of the Family

1. Paid leave of absence for women workers with sick children under the age of ten.
2. Adjustment of working hours to help mothers with handicapped children.
3. Periods of leave upon marriage and upon the birth of children.
4. Help with funeral costs.
5. Assistance and time off in case of the death of a member of the immediate family.
6. Paid leave when a member of the immediate family is sick or hospitalized.
7. Sale of school uniforms.

---

[27] Written agreements between employers and workers which establish conditions of work, and mutual rights and obligations.

[28] Vargas Escobar, Milú et al. WOMEN AND WORK. Centre for Constitutional Rights. Managua, 1991.

8. Construction of child development centres.
9. Supply of milk to rural children's services.
10. Health care for relatives of agricultural workers.
11. National and foreign fellowships for educational workers and their children.
12. Company store and basic basket.
13. End-of-year presents and bonuses, Christmas parties.
14. Canteen.
15. Sale of by-products.
16. Medical care for severely malnourished workers.
17. Group life insurance.
18. Pre-school facilities.

Protection of Reproductive Health

1. Medical checks whenever necessary and at least once every six months. In the case of women workers, these are to include voluntary and specific gynaecological examinations every two months for those working with pesticides during the spraying period.
2. Specialist medical care.

Training

1. Paid adult education of two-and-a-half hours daily.
2. Support for workers who are studying.

Occupational health and safety

1. Assistance upon death.
2. Group insurance.
3. Better dispensaries at Work Centres.
4. Training in the field of occupational health and safety.
5. Appointment of a health committee to guarantee physical and environmental conditions.
6. Funeral costs and other benefits.

VII. PROVISIONS TO ENSURE THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN ENSHRINED IN THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

The condition of disadvantage and subordination in relation to men experienced by women, in all our societies and in all periods of history, is beyond dispute.

The conception that the law can be considered neutral, generic, equal for both sexes, is not realistic, since being a woman is regarded as being equivalent to being a man, and where it is not equivalent, special laws are passed. Either way, the male sex is the reference. It is the man or male who serves as model for the laws, whether they are neutral or designed to provide special protection. One example of this is the failure to provide protection for pregnant prisoners within the national penitentiary system. The law makes no special provision for such women, owing to the fact that the provisions refer to "the prisoner" (a masculine noun in Spanish), taking the male sex as the pattern.

With this brief introduction to the legal and social situation of women, the report now briefly describes some changes that have taken place in Nicaraguan legislation in the civil, penal, labour and social areas.

7.1 Social

LAW No. 38: LAW ON THE DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE AT THE WISH OF ONE OF THE PARTIES

This is one of the most progressive laws concerning the family, even on the Latin American level. The law entitles a woman to obtain the dissolution of marriage solely because that is her wish. The frame of reference for the law is Art. 72 of Nicaragua's Political Constitution, which says: "**Marriage and the stable *de facto* union rest on the voluntary agreement of man and woman, and may be dissolved by mutual consent or at the wish of one of the parties**". This thus represents a new procedure for dissolving the matrimonial bond.

This type of law is simple in its application, and also provides guarantees of constitutional rights as concerns the care of minor children, the distribution of property, and alimony payments. Authorities involved are the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Nicaraguan Institute for Social Security and Welfare (INSSBI), institutions that protect the rights of the family.

The existing Civil Code established various reasons for the dissolution of the matrimonial bond, and required cumbersome and lengthy procedures, which to some extent forced people to stay together. The causes for divorce include the following:

- Pregnancy of the woman as a consequence of illicit relations prior to the marriage without the husband's knowledge.
- Attempt by either of the spouses against the other's life.
- Extreme cruelty and grave offences by one of the spouses.
- Adultery by the woman.
- Concubinage by the man.
- Obvious abandonment or absence of a spouse for more than five years without communication with the other spouse.

As can be seen, the new Law No. 38 entitles either party to render the legal relationship null and void. However, the Law is now being revised in view of the fact that there are cases where the woman is sued by her husband, and the children remain unprotected because the husband fails to declare his ownership of property. This can mean that the woman is left with the whole burden of the minor children, who themselves receive little or no benefit.

LAW No. 143: law on alimony

This recently adopted Law regulates the right to receive alimony and the obligation to make alimony payments. This right to alimony is based on the family, and also regulates the duty to provide alimony in a stable *de facto* situation, for the purposes of alimony.

The law specifies criteria such as:

- Income of the party providing support;
- The party's most recent monthly and overall income;
- Age and needs of the children;
- Age and needs of other recipients of alimony.
- Personal costs of party providing support.

The new law also provides legal recognition of the *de facto* union, which was not contemplated in our previous legislation.

The active subjects of this relationship are:

- Children;
- Spouse;
- Companion in a stable *de facto* union;
- Most closely related ascendants and descendants, where they are defenceless.

This right, unlike other obligations, is not subject to prescription, renunciation, transfer or seizure, in addition to which it may not be qualified on the grounds of any sort of debt, and has privilege and priority over any other obligation of the party providing the support. Furthermore, in case of failure to perform, a party may be sued for up to twelve months' of arrears.

The provisions in force prior to this Law contained discriminatory language, in that only children born of the marriage or children recognized by the father were entitled to claim alimony; whereas Chapter IV of this law, "**Responsible fatherhood and motherhood**", says: "**Fatherhood and motherhood shall be understood to mean the maintenance of the home, and the complete upbringing of the children by common efforts, with equal rights and responsibilities**".

There are many situations where mothers were previously unable to claim alimony for their minor children, because of the irresponsibility of the father not wishing to recognize his child; this Law, by contrast, makes it obligatory to pay alimony in such cases.

The new Law was approved by the President of the Republic, Mrs Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, on 8 July 1992. The Law is being publicized through the "Women, Children, Youth and Family" Commission of the National Assembly by means of conferences on the national level, wherein legal implications are explained, as are ways of invoking its provisions.

LAW GOVERNING RELATIONS OF MOTHER, FATHER AND CHILD

Decree No. 1065, published in La Gaceta No. 155, 3 July 1982

The Civil Code contained no provision on this subject. It is through the enactment of this Law that the members of the nuclear family can fully participate in joint decision-making.

The Law is closely related to the Law on Paternal Authority. Previously, women were entitled to exercise Paternal Authority only in the absence of the father. The new Law establishes the equal rights of mother and father in regard to Paternal Authority. Work is now going on to ensure that the Law is given practical effect.

LAW ON SOCIAL SECURITY

Decree No. 974 La Gaceta, No. 49 of 1 March 1982

This Law represented a step forward as concerns the time a mother could stay with her new-born child, the post-natal period having been prolonged by eight weeks.

Under the Law on Social Security, women are entitled to paid leave during which the State is obliged to pay 60 per cent of their wages and the employer 40 per cent.

Article 74 of the Political Constitution says:

"The State shall grant special protection to the process of human reproduction". "Women shall receive special protection during pregnancy and shall enjoy paid leave and adequate social security benefits".

No-one may deny women employment on grounds of pregnancy, or dismiss them during the post-natal period. While it is true that these principles are constitutional rights, the rules are sometimes infringed, and there are cases of pregnant women being dismissed under other articles of the Labour Code which make no mention of pregnancy.

This law will need to be given statutory effect in order to guarantee pregnant women their rights as provided under the Political Constitution.

LAW ON THE PROTECTION OF MINORS

This Law is in the process of revision, since the administrative procedures laid down in the Law do not allow the Nicaraguan Institute for Social Security and Welfare (INSSBI), the executing agency of the Law, to afford adequate protection for minors.

This has to do with the fact that a declaration that minors have been abandoned is an administrative act, establishing mechanisms whereby the parents who have abandoned their children can subsequently claim paternal authority over the minors, while INSSBI has no legal power to maintain the protection of abandoned minors.

7.2 Labour

While Chapter V, Article 80 of the Political Constitution says; **"Work is a right and a social responsibility, establishing equality for both men and women, establishing equal wages, as well as opportunities to choose any kind of work, without discrimination for political, social, gender or any other reasons, which assures them well-being compatible with dignity"**, women still suffer inequality as concerns their participation in the labour market.

As far as work opportunities are concerned, lack of training sometimes causes women to be regarded as supplementary on the labour market, since there is a greater demand for men as such, and correspondingly greater opportunities.

This situation is today self-evident, since the highest levels of unemployment are among women, and women sometimes have to do jobs that are not in keeping with their training. In certain areas and places, women have to endure infringements of their rights as women, since in order to keep their job, they have to put up with abuse on the part of a male boss, having to submit themselves to the situation for reason of economic necessity; and being in many cases single mothers, who have to bear the burden of responsibility for their children.

There have been few changes or far-reaching reforms as concerns the participation of women; there has however been progress in agriculture, where women are now increasingly included in the workforce, and are no longer, as previously, regarded as substitutes for men and entitled to no remuneration.

Work is now in progress on a preliminary draft of the Law of the Labour Code, which is supported by women in general, who have been pushing for reforms to the Labour Code to ensure real equality of opportunity and better participation for women in the world of work.

7.3 Penal

The penal legislation addresses crimes against the physical, moral and psychological integrity of the rights of women. Among such crimes we find various forms of rape, abduction and physical injury.

The National Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Youth and Family carried out consultations with various sectors of society on the national level, both formally and informally, taking into consideration the views of young people and adults, men and women, with the assistance, co-operation and co-ordination of civil and military authorities, before undertaking a reform of the existing Penal Code, some of whose provisions were discriminatory against women.

Among such discriminatory provisions were those that used terms like "proper" and "improper" in relation to women, and which differentiated between "women of good repute" and other kinds of women; the reformed Penal Code eliminates terms that suggest that only women can be victims of acts of violence, as part of the idea that violence is a social problem which affects children of both sexes as well as women and men.

The reforms provided legal definition of, and established as offences, the acts of rape, estupro (a lesser form of rape), seduction, abduction, indecent abuse, sexual corruption of minors, trafficking in persons, procuring or pandering, and sodomy.

All these offences have now been defined and legally established in more technical terms [29]; in the case of **rape**, the discriminatory term "**lying with a woman**" was replaced by the term "**carnal access to a person**". The age of consent was raised from twelve to fourteen years. It was established that where the victim is under ten years of age, the maximum penalty of twenty years shall apply. The reforms also established specific aggravating circumstances for the crime of rape, including the existence of a blood relationship; other aggravating circumstances are those where the victim is physically or mentally handicapped, where there is a relationship of authority of dependency, where the perpetrator is carrying a sexually transmitted disease, where the victim is pregnant, or where the perpetrator is married to or in a stable *de facto* relationship with the victim.

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is not considered an extenuating circumstance, and cumulative penalties are provided where rape results in death of the victim, miscarriage, or premature birth with the death of the child.

As concerns **estupro** (carnal knowledge after seduction), guilt is established where the perpetrator, whether man or woman, is over twenty-one and is married or in a stable *de facto* union, it being part of the definition that the offence involves false pretences. In cases where the perpetrator actually contracts the marriage, the sentence is annulled, except where the offence was committed by a person in public authority, a superior at work, a tutor, guardian or teacher or where there is a blood relationship, or de jure or *de facto* family relationship, a relationship of authority, dependency or trust. The sentence in such cases is up to ten years.

In the case of **seduction**, a new offence was established, known as illegitimate seduction, which means carnal access to a person over the age of fourteen and below the age of eighteen, in a relationship of authority, dependency, trust or family connection. This includes teachers, guardians and persons in authority.

The offence of **blackmail or harassment for sexual purposes** is not defined in terms of age or sex. In general, sexual harassment takes place at work or at school. The victims are offered job stability or good marks. The new law makes no provision for out-of-court settlements between the parties, and the judge continues the trial until a verdict is arrived at.

Abduction comprises three constituent elements: sexual purpose, removal, and the fact that these are both against the victim's will. The latter element is assumed where the victim is below the age of fourteen,

---

[29] The legal definitions contained in the reforms to the Penal Code of Nicaragua were prepared on the basis of an internal document of the Standing Committee on Women, Children, Youth and the Family of the Nicaraguan National Assembly during the current legislative period.

in which case the penalty is established at ten years in prison. If the offence of abduction is accompanied by rape, the penalties are cumulative.

Indecent abuse is legally defined as lewd or indecent advances without the other person's consent, use being made of force, intimidation or any other means of coercing the victim into allowing carnal access. The absence of consent is presumed where the victim is below the age of fourteen.

The reform establishes a new criminal offence, that of the **sexual corruption** of minors. Penalties are provided for inducing, promoting, facilitating or favouring the sexual corruption of a minor below the age of sixteen, even where the victim consents. The sentence is increased to twelve years if there are aggravating circumstances, for example, if the victim is less than twelve years old, if the offence was committed for gain, or to satisfy the wish of third parties; if the offence involves violence, intimidation or abuse of authority; if there are blood or marriage ties involved; if there is a relationship of authority, trust or dependency; and if the act of corruption is on a massive scale.

The offence of **procuring or pandering** consists of the establishment or operation of places of prostitution for the purpose of gain, and the use of physical or moral violence or the abuse of authority or any other means employed to impel persons to enter or remain in such places. It is important that the legal definition establishes the concept of "engaging in any form of sexual commerce", since in Nicaragua there are other forms of sexual commerce in use. Broadening the definition ensures that it covers all possible forms. The offence is also defined as involving the desire for gain or the satisfaction of others' wishes, as well as the promotion, facilitation or encouragement of prostitution. The penalty may be increased to ten years if perpetrator and victim are married or in a stable *de facto* union. Similarly, anyone who, without being entitled to claim support from a person, shares in that person's earnings from the practice of prostitution, is deemed to be guilty of the offence; while anyone who, being so entitled, forces that person to hand over all or part of such earnings is likewise guilty of the offence.

The reforms to the Penal Code establish that prostitution is the practice of carnal commerce for money between persons of the same or different sexes.

The offence of **trafficking in persons** in persons has been reformed in the sense that it is no longer only women who can be the victims of the offence. When the word "person" is used in the new legislation, it has been broadened to include women and men, and the maximum penalty is applied where both perpetrator and victim are married or in a *de facto* union.

Another offence affected by the reform is that of **sodomy**. Here the new legislation adds the encouragement and promotion of sodomy, as well as propaganda on its behalf. The new wording no longer contains reference to copulation by force or intimidation between persons of the same sex, since this offence has now been formally defined as "rape".

The reforms to the Penal Code established in Law No. 150 were approved on 8 July 1992 by the President of the Republic. These reforms provide greater protection for girls and women against rape, harassment, illegitimate seduction, abduction, indecent abuse and other forms of violence against the rights of women and men.

In Nicaragua, a State under the rule of law, the Government is taking steps to bring about far-reaching changes designed to counter violence against women and children. One mechanism created to guarantee these actions is the new Commission on Violence against Women, established on 23 June 1992 by the President of the Republic and co-ordinated by Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM).

The National Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Youth and Family is elaborating a Family Code to regulate the duties and obligations of the family for the benefit of women.

7.4 Nicaraguan women and international conventions

Article 46 of the Political Constitution of the Republic of Nicaragua gives full effect to the rights enshrined in various international agreements and treaties which contain, among others, provisions relating

to the rights of women workers. When these are given constitutional recognition, they become laws of the Republic.

Conventions recognized in Nicaragua's Political Constitution:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

7.4.1 Convention on the nationality of married women

This Convention was opened for signature and ratification by the United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution 1440 (XI) of 29 January 1957, and entered into force on 11 August 1958. In the Convention, the Contracting Parties agree to the following:

- Neither the celebration nor the dissolution of a marriage between a national and an alien, nor the change of nationality by the husband during marriage, shall automatically affect the nationality of the wife.
- Neither the voluntary acquisition nor the renunciation of the husband's nationality shall prevent the retention of such nationality by the wife of such national.
- The alien wife may, at her request, acquire the nationality of her husband through specially privileged naturalization procedures, subject only to such limitations as may be imposed in the interests of national security or public policy.
- The present Convention shall not be construed as affecting any legislation or judicial practice by which the alien wife may, at her request, acquire her husband's nationality as a matter of right.

The Convention has been approved and ratified by Nicaragua.

7.4.2 Convention on the nationality of women

This Convention, approved in Montevideo in 1933, establishes that there shall be no distinction based on sex in regard to nationality, either in legislation or in practice. The convention was ratified by Nicaragua on 31 August 1955.

7.4.3 Convention on the political rights of women

This Convention was opened for signature and ratification by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 640 (VII) of 20 December 1952, and entered into force on 7 July 1954.

The Convention provides that, on equal terms with men, women shall be entitled without any discrimination to:

- Vote in all elections;
- Be eligible to all elected public bodies established by national legislation;
- Hold public office and perform all the public functions established by national legislation.

This Convention has been ratified by Nicaragua.

7.4.4 Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women

This Convention, approved in Bogotá in 1948, establishes that the right to vote and to be elected to national office may not be denied or restricted for reasons of sex. It was ratified by Nicaragua on 22 August 1956.

7.4.5 Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Civil Rights to Women

This Convention, approved in Bogotá in 1948, provides that women shall be granted the same civil rights as those enjoyed by men. It was ratified by Nicaragua on 22 August 1956.

7.4.6 Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

This Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 7 November 1967. It states that discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and with the welfare of the family and society, since it prevents their participation, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, and is an obstacle to their full development and their potentialities in the service of humanity.

It provides that all appropriate measures shall be taken to abolish existing laws, customs, regulations and practices which are discriminatory against women, and to establish adequate legal protection for equal rights for men and women. To this end, the principle of equality of rights shall be embodied in the Constitution or otherwise guaranteed by law; furthermore, the international instruments relating to the elimination of discrimination against women shall be ratified or acceded to and fully implemented as soon as practicable.

An analysis of the contents of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in relation to Nicaragua's constitutional precepts shows that Articles 27 and 48 of the Constitution enshrine the principles of Equality Before the Law and Absolute Equality Between Men and Women, respectively, these being consistent with the commitment established in the Convention concerning the legal protection of the rights of women, on the basis of equality with those of men.

In general we may affirm that the spirit of the constitutional norms reflects the principles adopted by the Convention, and it is in the application of the secondary laws that we encounter major obstacles to making these rights effective.

As concerns the Rights of the Family established in Articles 70 and 79, our Constitution enshrines almost everything set forth in this Convention as concerns marriage and family relations, establishing equal rights and responsibilities for men and women.

Similarly, as concerns the Labour Rights (Articles 80 and 88), our *Magna Carta* establishes the express recognition of the rights of workers as referred to in the Convention.

As concerns the provisions of the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, our Constitution does not address this subject from the specific point of view of women, but rather deals with it in general terms.

As a mechanism for helping to tackle the problems of rural women, the Nicaraguan Government is promoting, through the National Reconciliation and Rehabilitation Programme (PRRN), the programme on "Women, the Environment and Development", which provides for integrated projects involving training, environmental education, organization and sustainable development.

As concerns education and culture, the Convention contains provisions that are addressed in one Title of our constitution, which provides, among other things, for free and equal access to education for all Nicaraguans, in a critical, scientific and humanist spirit.

As we have seen, an analysis of this Convention with regard to the constitutional norms shows that its provisions are indeed reflected in Title IV, "Rights, duties and guarantees of the Nicaraguan people", and in other titles and chapters of the Constitution. This particular Convention has been dealt with in greater depth because it is felt to be the most important one, bringing together regulations from different legal disciplines pertaining to the human rights of women.

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women was approved and ratified by Nicaragua in Decree No. 789 of 10 August 1981, published in the official newspaper La Gaceta, No. 191 of 25 August 1981.

7.4.7 Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in States of Emergency and Armed Conflict

This Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 14 December 1974 in resolution 3318 (XXIX).

Bearing in mind the need to provide special protection for women and children belonging to the civilian population, the Declaration prohibits and condemns attack and bombings of the civilian population, which inflicts incalculable suffering, especially on women and children, who are the most vulnerable members of the population.

In relation to the rights of working women, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has adopted the following Conventions:

Convention No. 3 concerning the employment of women before and after childbirth

This Convention establishes the rights of women workers before and after childbirth, and specifies that the term "woman" signifies any female person, irrespective of age or nationality, whether married or unmarried, and the term "child" signifies any child whether legitimate or illegitimate.

The Convention stipulates that in any public or private industrial or commercial undertaking, or in any branch thereof, other than in an undertaking in which only members of the same family are employed, a woman:

- Shall have the right to leave her work if she produces a medical certificate stating that her confinement will probably take place in six weeks;
- Shall not be permitted to work during the six weeks following her confinement;
- Shall be paid during both periods, before and after the birth, benefits sufficient for the maintenance of herself and her child, in good health conditions;
- Shall be entitled to the free attendance of a doctor or midwife.
- If she is nursing her child, shall be allowed half an hour twice a day for this purpose;
- May not be dismissed during the periods referred to, before and after the birth, or if she remains absent from her work for a longer period as a result of illness arising out of pregnancy or confinement.

This Convention was adopted in 1919 and ratified by Nicaragua in 1934.

Convention No. 4 concerning night work

This Convention establishes that women, without distinction of age, shall not be employed during the night in any public or private industrial undertaking, or in any branch thereof, other than an undertaking in which only members of the same family are employed.

For the purposes of the Convention, the term "night" signifies a period of at least eleven consecutive hours, including the intervals between ten o'clock in the evening and five o'clock in the morning.

This Convention was adopted in 1919 and ratified by Nicaragua in 1934.

Conventions No. 41 and No. 89 concerning night work of women employed in industry

Convention No. 41, adopted in 1934, was thoroughly revised in Convention No. 89, adopted in 1948, which superseded both No. 41 and No. 4. The new Convention covered new aspects, such as:

- A broader definition of the term "night" to signify a period of at least eleven consecutive hours, including an interval of at least seven consecutive hours falling between ten o'clock in the evening and seven o'clock in the morning. That is, night work is considered to be the period of seven consecutive hours falling between ten at night and seven in the morning;

- Maintaining the prohibition of night work for women, but providing an exception for women holding responsible positions of a managerial or technical character, and women employed in health and welfare services who are not ordinarily engaged in manual work.

Convention No. 45 concerning the employment of women in underground work in mines of all kinds

This Convention prohibits the employment of women, whatever their age, in underground work in any mine, "mine" being understood to mean any undertaking, whether public or private, for the extraction of any substance from under the surface of the earth. Exemptions from this prohibition may be provided for:

- Females holding positions of management who do not perform manual work;
- Females employed in health and welfare services;
- Females who, in the course of their studies, spend a period of training in the underground parts of a mine.

This Convention was adopted in 1935 and ratified by Nicaragua in 1976.

Convention No 100 concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value

This Convention establishes the obligation to promote and guarantee the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

The term "remuneration" includes the ordinary, basic or minimum wage or salary and any additional emoluments whatsoever payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the employer to the worker and arising out of the worker's employment. The term "equal remuneration" refers to rates of remuneration established without discrimination based on sex.

This Convention was adopted in 1951 and ratified by Nicaragua in 1967.

Convention No. 102 concerning minimum standards of social security (contains a special section on maternity benefit, Part VIII: Maternity Benefit)

This part of the Convention secures to the persons protected the provision of maternity benefit to cover pregnancy and confinement and their consequences, and suspension of earnings resulting therefrom.

The benefits are to include at least prenatal, confinement, and post-natal medical care, either by medical practitioners or by qualified midwives, and hospitalization where necessary.

This Convention was adopted in 1952 and has not been ratified by Nicaragua.

Convention No. 103 concerning maternity protection

This Convention applies to women engaged in industrial undertakings and in non-industrial and agricultural occupations, including women wage earners working at home. The word "woman" means any female person, irrespective of age, nationality, race or creed, whether married or unmarried, and the term "child" means any child whether born in wedlock or otherwise. The following rights are established for such women:

- A period of maternity leave on production of a medical certificate stating the presumed date of the confinement;

- A period of maternity leave of at least twelve weeks, including a period of compulsory leave after confinement, which shall in no case be less than six weeks;

- The leave to be extended to the actual date of confinement, even if this is later than the presumed date, without a reduction on that account of the period of compensation;

- In case of illness arising out of pregnancy or confinement, the prenatal or postnatal leave shall be extended;

- Cash benefits sufficient for the full and healthy maintenance of the woman and her child in accordance with a suitable standard of living;

- Medical benefits shall include prenatal, confinement and postnatal care by qualified midwives or medical practitioners as well as hospitalization care where necessary;

- If a woman is nursing her child she shall be entitled to interrupt her work for this purpose at a time or times to be prescribed by national laws or regulations;

- It shall not be lawful for an employer to give notice to a woman who is absent from work during periods of prenatal or postnatal leave or for illness arising out of the pregnancy or confinement.

This Convention, which was adopted in 1952, is a revision of Convention No. 3 and has not yet been ratified by Nicaragua.

Convention No. 111 concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

This Convention requires parties to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination therein.

To this effect, the term "discrimination" includes any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation; such other distinction, exclusion or preference which has the same effects as may be determined by the Member State concerned after consultation with the employers' and workers' organizations and other appropriate bodies.

The terms "employment" and "occupation" include access to vocational training, access to employment, and conditions of employment. Any distinction, exclusion or preference in respect of a particular job based on the inherent requirements thereof shall not be deemed to be discrimination.

This Convention was adopted in 1958 and ratified by Nicaragua in 1967.

Convention No. 122 concerning employment policy

This Convention establishes that Parties shall pursue a policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment, which will guarantee the freedom of choice of employment and provide the fullest possible opportunity for each worker to qualify for a job for which he is well suited, irrespective of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

This Convention was adopted in 1964 and ratified by Nicaragua in 1981.

Convention No. 156 concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers

This Convention establishes the principle of equality of opportunity and non-discrimination for men and women workers through the application of:

- Policies that provide equality of opportunity for men and women with large families, and the inadmissibility of using that fact for purposes of discrimination;
- Services within the community to assist working fathers and mothers;
- Educational measures to secure public recognition of the concept of equal treatment and equal rights for men and women.

This Convention was adopted in 1981 and has not yet been ratified by Nicaragua.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. *Friends of Nicaragua.* POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF NICARAGUA. *Canada, 1989.*

2. *National Assembly.* REVOLUTIONARY LEGISLATURE (1985-1990). *Managua, 1990.*

3. *National Assembly.* LAW ON ALIMONY, LAW NO. 143. *Managua, 1992.*

4. *National Assembly.* LAW ON REFORMS TO THE PENAL CODE. *Managua, 1992.*

5. *Central Bank of Nicaragua.* ACHIEVING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HARMONY. *Managua, 1990.*

6. *Boletín Económico.* VISTAZO ECONOMICO. *Managua, January 1992.*

7. *Boletín Económico.* VISTAZO ECONOMICO. *Managua, March 1992.*

8. *Centre for Constitutional Law.* RIGHTS OF THE WORKING WOMAN. NORAD. *Managua, 1992.*

9. *Centre for Constitutional Law.* WOMEN AND WORK. *Managua, 1991.*

10. *International Training Centre, ILO, Turin.* PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING. *Nicaragua, 1992.*

11. *Council of State.* 1979-1984 PRINCIPAL LAWS APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION. *Managua, 1984.*

12. *Faculty of Juridical Sciences, UNAN.* PENAL CODE OF NICARAGUA. *Managua, 1976.*

13. *FIDEG.* EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO. *Managua, 1992.*

14. *FIDEG.* IMPACT OF THE ADJUSTMENT MEASURES ON HOUSEHOLDS, LIVING CONDITIONS IN MANAGUA AND THE STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL. *Managua, 1992.*

15. *Ana Isabel García, Enrique Gomániz.* CENTRAL AMERICAN WOMEN, STRUCTURAL TRENDS, VOL. I. *San José, 1989.*

16. *Government of the Republic of Nicaragua.* UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, NICARAGUA NATIONAL REPORT. *Managua, 1991.*

17. *Government of the Republic of Nicaragua.* NICARAGUA: MEDIUM TERM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1992-1996 (SUMMARY). *Managua, 1992.*

18. *Nicaraguan Institute for Women.* SOCIAL POLICY: A PROPOSAL. *Managua, 1992.*

19. *Nicaraguan Institute for Women.* SECOND REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN. *Managua, 1988.*

20. *J.A.Tijerino Medrano, Mario Palma.* NICARAGUA'S LABOUR LAW AND THE ILO CONVENTIONS. VOL. I. *San José, 1978.*

20. *J.A.Tijerino Medrano, Mario Palma.* NICARAGUA'S LABOUR LAW AND THE ILO CONVENTIONS. VOL. II. *San José, 1978.*

22. *Ministry of Economics and Development.* GENERAL OUTLINES OF A NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1991-2000. *Managua, 1991.*

23. *Ministry of Education.* INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS. *Managua, 1981.*

24. *Ministry of the Presidency.* NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 1992-2000, STRATEGY FOR THE REDUCTION OF POVERTY. *Managua, 1992.*

25. *Ministry of the Presidency.* CIREFCA ACTION PLAN 1992-1995. *Managua, 1992.*

26. *Ministry of the Presidency.* SOCIAL POLICY. *Managua, 1992.*

27. *Ministry of Health.* TRIENNIAL HEALTH PLAN. *Managua, 1991.*

28. *United Nations.* CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN. *United Nations, 1979.*

29. *Vargas, Milú.* REGULATIONS CONCERNING WOMEN'S WORK IN NICARAGUA. *Managua, 1992.*